

NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST AND  
UNITED WAY OF HENRY COUNTY AND  
MARTINSVILLE

# EVICTIION PREVENCTION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

For Henry County and Martinsville

# PROJECT GOAL

Following a grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, the United Way of Martinsville & Henry County (UW) contracted National Housing Trust (NHT) to complete a needs assessment to identify what evictions in Henry County & Martinsville (HCM) look like (both before the eviction moratorium and now), who they are impacting most, and what tools are being used locally to help prevent evictions. Through this project, NHT helped UW develop a community-wide strategy to combat evictions.

# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

Project Goal

Process and Methodology

What We Learned

Findings

Recommended Approaches

Next Steps

# GRATITUDE

*A giant thank you to the over 100 community members and peer experts who engaged with us throughout this project!*

*Special thank you to Grace Network and Virginia Legal Aid Society*

*10 community stakeholders engaged in one-on-one discovery calls*

*7 resident focus group participants*

*74 community survey respondents*

*9 nonprofit focus group participants*

*Special thank you to DHCD and Senta Gorie*

*Special thank you to Lisa Frick*

*8 peer experts who were consulted on their eviction prevention work*

*5 landlord and property manager focus group participants*

# PROCESS

## DISCOVERY CALLS

Calls with local stakeholders to understand the community context, challenges, and successes around eviction prevention.

## DATA COLLECTION

Qualitative research using existing data sources to identify demographic, housing, and community trends.

## COMMUNITY- WIDE SURVEY

Survey of community residents, landlords, nonprofits, faith-based organizations and government representatives to assess the lived impacts of evictions.

## FOCUS GROUPS

5-10 participant focus groups with non-profits, landlords, and renters to learn about participants' experiences around the evictions process.

## PEER-TESTED MODELS

Research of regional and national eviction prevention programs to learn about tested solutions and identify best practices.

# APPLYING A RACIAL EQUITY LENS

## CENTERING LIVED EXPERIENCE

Throughout this engagement, NHT addressed racial equity by focusing outreach to people who are most likely to experience an eviction and ensuring that recommended approaches address the cyclical and exploitative barriers created by systemic racism around housing instability and poverty.

# WHAT WE LEARNED

*Evictions are a symptom of a larger problem*





# FINDINGS

## SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES

Intergenerational poverty and a lack of financial resources

Housing instability

Siloed community





# FINDINGS

## PROCESS CHALLENGES

Lack of client-mapping systems

Absence of resident voice in community-decision making

Lack of visibility of existing resources



# RECOMMENDED APPROACHES

## SYSTEMS CHANGE SOLUTIONS

1. Expand United Way's Advisory Committee.
2. Conduct community systems mapping, particularly around the Latinx community and eviction prevention.

## COMMUNITY CHANGE SOLUTIONS

Identified during the systems mapping process to address systemic barriers, these solutions present radical change from business as usual and require a champion who will help advocate for their implementation throughout HCM businesses, government, and non-profit community.

## PROGRAMS CHANGE SOLUTIONS

Tested eviction prevention programs that should be implemented based on the needs identified while conducting the systems change solutions and be executed through a racial equity lens.

# NEXT STEPS

## UNITED WAY RECEIVED AN IMPLEMENTATION GRANT FROM DHCD TO:

- Hire staff dedicated to eviction prevention
- Convene partners and local stakeholders to present funded program
- Begin outreach to landlords and tenants that may benefit from eviction prevention related services

**QUESTIONS?**